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# LIMELIGHT: IBRAHIM EL-SALAHY - HARAZA

## 28.04.2015-31.05.2015

*'I keep working on one particular theme inspired by a tree, an acacia locally called the Haraza that grows on the banks of the Nile. During the rainy season the tree is leafless, it blossoms with freshly budding green leaves when the weather turns dry, and the river flows at its lowest towards the sea. Through all, the tree remains steadfast, silently watching over the passage of seasons and time.'* - Ibrahim El-Salahy

This one-room display of works by Ibrahim El-Salahy (the first public gallery exhibition in the UK since his major show at **Tate Modern** in 2013) reflects his fascination with the Haraza tree, native to Sudan, which has peculiar and inspirational characteristics.

El-Salahy himself is also native to Sudan. He is one of the pioneers of the Sudanese and African art movements. In 1954, he left Sudan on a Government Scholarship to study at the Slade School of Fine Art in London where he was inspired by Western Modernism.

Returning to Sudan to teach, Salahy was held as a political prisoner in the mid 1970's, after which he left Sudan. He now lives in Oxford. Throughout his career, Salahy has held influential positions as a cultural figure, advising governments and the Arab world on cultural policies.

The series inspired by the Haraza tree is an ongoing investigation of the tree / body metaphor, a link between heaven and earth, creator and created.

Speaking about when the tree blooms, El-Salahy says, ***'This is a definitive statement. Like saying 'I am me! I am an individual! I do not follow what everyone is doing! When everyone is going to be green, let them be green. I am not! It's individuality. I love that very much.'***

*Limelight* is a series of one-room displays, showing a range of exciting contemporary art.

Find out more about El-Salahy's work [here](#).

In partnership with **Vigo Gallery**

Image: Ibrahim El-Salahy, *The Tree*, 2001 © Vigo Gallery and the artist. Courtesy Vigo Gallery and the artist.

